

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Without prejudice or disclaimer, please cancel original claims 1 to 17 and add new claims 18 to 25 as follows:

Claims 1 to 17 (Canceled)

18. (New) A method for the pretreatment of an aqueous solution containing radioactive thorium prior to passing the aqueous solution through a quantity of ion exchange resin for removal of the thorium, comprising the steps of:  
diluting the aqueous solution with water; and  
removing organic material from the aqueous solution by filtering.
19. (New) The method of claim 39, comprising the further step of adding complexing agents to the aqueous solution.
20. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein the complexing agent binds fluoride.
21. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein the complexing agent is aluminum.
22. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein the amount of water used is sufficient to reduce a concentration of nitric acid in the aqueous solution to 1.0 molar or less.
23. (New) The method of claim 39, comprising the further step of adjusting an acid or base concentration of the aqueous solution.
24. (New) The method of claim 39, comprising the further step of passing the aqueous solution through activated charcoal.
25. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein the aqueous solution is an effluent from a solvent extraction uranium purification process.